

# Cayuvava language

**Cayubaba** (Cayuvava, Cayuwaba, Kayuvava) is a moribund language of the Bolivian Amazon. The descendants of the Cayubaba people inhabit the Beni region to the west of the Mamoré River, North of the Santa Ana Yacuma, with a population of 794 inhabitants.<sup>[3]</sup>

Since the declaration of the Supreme Decree N.º 25894 on September 11, 2000, Cayubaba has been one of the official indigenous languages of Bolivia,<sup>[4]</sup> which was included in the Political Constitution, which was introduced on February 7, 2009.<sup>[5]</sup>

<b>Cayubaba</b>	
	Kayuvava
<b>Native to</b>	Bolivia
<b>Region</b>	Beni Department
<b>Ethnicity</b>	650 (2006) <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Native speakers</b>	4 (2007) <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Language family</b>	Language isolate
<b>Language codes</b>	
<b>ISO 639-3</b>	cyb
<b>Glottolog</b>	cayu1262 ( <a href="http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/cayu1262">http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/cayu1262</a> ) <sup>[2]</sup>

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## Current situation

As shown by Crevels and Muysken (2012),<sup>[6]</sup> the territory of Cayubaba forms part of a region historically known as Mojos (or Moxos), that covers approximately 200,000 square kilometers of what is currently the Department of Beni. Above all, the Cayubaba focus on traditional farming, growing rice, yucca, corn, bananas, sugar cane, beans, pumpkins, sweet potatoes, etc. They also raised livestock, although on a small scale. The Cayubaba community meets at the Subcentral Indígena Cayubaba, which is affiliated to the Indigenous Peoples Center of Beni (CPIB) and is, therefore, a member of the Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Eastern Bolivia (CIDOB).

## Historical Aspects

The first to establish contact with the Cayubaba was the Jesuit missionary priest, P. Agustín Zapata in 1693. As Crevels and Muysken (2012)<sup>[7]</sup> point out, it was during this first visit to Cayubaba territory that Father Zapata saw seven villages, of which six had approximately 1,800 inhabitants and one had more than 2,000. At the beginning of the 18th century, P. Antonio Garriga funded the Mission of Exaltation of the Holy Cross, which was primarily inhabited by the Cayubaba. Later the Missions of San Carlos, Conception, and Peñas were founded.

At the beginning of the 19th century, when Swedish geologist and paleontologist Erland Nordenskiöld visited Cayubaba, there were only 100 people from the group, who apart from their language, kept very little of their native culture. The Cayubaba region was famous for growing tobacco. At the time of the exploitation of rubber, the commercialization of tobacco was intense throughout the country, and Exaltación became a busy port on the Mamoré River. In the mid- 20th century, however, the cultivation of tobacco was almost stopped by the mass emigration of Cayubaba to Exaltación, who were fleeing the measles epidemic that almost decimated the population.

## Genetic Classification

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As indicated by Crevels and Muysken (2012),<sup>[8]</sup> despite all the tentative proposals to genetically classify Cayubaba (see, for example, Greenberg, 1987);<sup>[9]</sup> Kaufman, 1990,<sup>[10]</sup> 1994;<sup>[11]</sup> Suárez, 1974),<sup>[12]</sup> the language is still considered a language isolate.

## Language Contact

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Jolkesky (2016) notes that there are lexical similarities with the Arawak, Bororo, Takana, and Tupi language families due to contact.<sup>[13]</sup>

## Grammatical Sketch

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### Phonology

Cayubaba presents the following system of consonantal phonemes (taken from Crevels and Muysken, 2012)<sup>[14]</sup> based on (Key 1961),<sup>[15]</sup> 1962,<sup>[16]</sup> 1967).<sup>[17]</sup>

**Table 1: Consonants**

Bilabial		Alveolar		Alveopalatal		Palatal		Velar		Glottal	
<b>Sound</b>	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-
<b>Occlusives</b>	p	b	t	d				k			
<b>Affricates</b>					tʃ	dʒ					
<b>Fricatives</b>		β	s		ʃ				h		
<b>Nasal</b>		m		n		ŋ					
<b>Vibrant</b>				r [ɾ~l~d̰]							
<b>Semi-vowels</b>	w						j				

In the second table, we are presented with the system of vowel phonemes (taken from Crevels and Muysken, 2012)<sup>[18]</sup> and based on (Key, 1961).<sup>[15]</sup>

**Table 2: Vowels**

	Previous	Central	Posterior
High	i		u
Medium	e		o
Low	æ	a	

## Vocabulary and Word Classes

Regarding the vocabulary and word classes in Cayubaba, the following can be pointed out (Crevels and Muysken, 2012):<sup>[19]</sup>

- In Cayubaba, there are five distinct word classes: verbs, for example *boro* 'give', *tavu* 'swim'. Nouns, for example *veje-veje* 'wind', *ñoko* 'monkey'. Pronouns, for example *ãre-ai* '1SG', *ãre-a* '2SG', and modifiers and particles, for example *kóra* 'perhaps', *ñõhõ* 'now'.
- In regards to adjectives, many adjectival concepts are expressed through predicate adjectives formed with the affixes *pa(+i)... +ha*, for example: *pa-i-ra-ha* "Well, be well", *pa-ti-ha* 'red, is red'. This is to say, it is difficult to establish criteria for the class of adjectives separate from verbs.
- In addition, Cayubaba presents some adverbs, such as *piirë* 'slowly', *irire* 'good'.
- *boro* The basic numerical system includes five numerals: *karata/kata* 'one', *mitia/mite* 'two', *kurapa* 'three', *chaada/chaad* 'four', *y me(i)da(ru)* 'five'. These numerals can be combined with the *rirobo* element (*irobo/erobo/iro/hiro/kiro*) 'five more' to form numbers up to ten. The numbers eleven to nineteen are formed with the augmentative suffix - *hiiñe* 'and, in addition to'. Starting from one hundred, borrowed words from Castilian are used, such as *karata-siento*[one-one hundred] "one hundred", *karata-mirie* [one-thousand] 'a thousand'.

## Morphology

Regarding the morphology of Cayubaba, the following is presented from Crevels and Muysken:<sup>[20]</sup>

- Regarding the nominal morphology, the cayubaba shows a process of full reduplication, for example *wirri-wirri* 'iguana', and partial, for example *uku-ku* 'pig'. In addition, there are also six complex and productive processes of nominal composition:

Composition processes	Example
noun nucleus (possessed) + noun modifier (possessor)	<i>hebë-kafe</i> 'coffee husk'
sequence of roots with figurative meaning	<i>ridore-maka'año</i> (lit. 'burning-sun')
verb + noun	<i>vede-ñika'año de casa</i> (lit. 'have-home')
onomatopoeic element + noun	<i>sísíha-ñoko</i> 'type of monkey'
modifier + noun	<i>chakirri-hiki</i> 'maíz suave' (lit. 'soft corn')
modifier + noun + modifier	<i>sísíha-pichí-yíti</i> 'pequeña hormiga negra'(lit. 'small-ant-black')

The plural nominal is expressed through the proclitic *me* = as observed in (Figure 1). In nominal sentences, the proclitic *me*, is appended to the first element of the sentence, as seen in (Figure 2).

(1)	<b><i>me=i-asi</i></b>
	PL=ART-man
	'the men'

<b><i>me=rishò</i></b>	<i>raviri</i>
PL=new	oars
'new oars'	

- The personal pronouns in Cayubaba function as independent elements, but they actually are derived from verb forms. The basic pronouns, which are presented in Table 3, are derived from the existential verb *ãre* 'there are', 'exist'. In this verb form, the direct object marker is suffixed. In the case of plural pronouns, you can put the personal markers before the suffix *-hi* 'present active state'. These pronouns may be considered, then, like presentative pronouns in the sense of 'I'm the one who...'.

**Table 3: Base Pronouns**

	Base Pronouns
1SG	<i>ãre-ai</i>
2SG	<i>ãre-a</i>
3SG	<i>ãre-e/ãär-e</i>
1PI	<i>ãre-ere/ãre-hi-ere</i>
1PE	
2PL	<i>ãre-pere/ãre-hi-pere</i>
3PL	<i>ãre-riki/ãre-hi-riki</i>

- As for the verbal morphology, there are processes of reduplication and affixation, as well as a set of proclitic and enclitic elements. There are certain types of reduplication, for example [root + root] reduplication in *ròmò-ròmò* 'kneel down' to express an ongoing action. As for the process of affixation, the verb can be modified by a series of prefixes and suffixes that indicate the subject, object, time, appearance, mode, etc., for example, the first-position prefixes that mark time and appearance, such as the *mara*- 'hypothetical future' in (3) and *mera*- 'simple future' in (4).

(3)	<b><i>mara-h-i-bachari-dya</i></b>
	FUT.HIP-1SG-CL-inform-2SG.OI
	'(I) would inform you.'

(4)	<b><i>mera-h-i-bekere~re-ë</i></b>
	FUT-1SG-CL-learn~CAUS.INC-2SG.OD
	'I will teach.'

- The verbal complex can also be modified by a series of proclitic and enclitic elements. Within the proclitic elements, there are modal/evidential proclitics, *chui*= 'certainty', *manoro*= 'almost'

(surely), to have the intention. Within the enclitic elements, there are locative enclitics, e.g. "*=jahi*" 'below', "*=puti*" 'outside', the temporal or aspectual enclitics, e.g. "*koidi*" 'sometimes', "*=ñoho*" 'now', and the relational enclitics, e.g. "*=dyë*" 'together', *= ma* 'with respect to a woman'.

## Syntax

With regard to the syntax of Cayubaba, the following is seen (Crevels and Muysken, 2012):<sup>[21]</sup>

- Cayubaba does not present a fixed constituent order. The only mandatory element in the clause is that the predicate usually precedes the subject and objects, as is observed in (5). If the subject is a free personal pronoun, then it always precedes the predicate, as observed in (6).

(5)	<i>ari-a-ñuhu</i>	<i>kita</i>	<i>ki=tõrene</i>	<i>dy-a-ñika-che</i>
	CMPL-INTL-to bring	water	ART-woman	COM.LOC-3SG-house-3SG.POS
	'The woman brought water to her house.'			

(6)	<i>ãree</i>	<i>a-poërëre-ha</i>	<i>karata</i>	<i>toro-takorako</i>	<i>mitia</i>	<i>takorako</i>
	PRO:3SG	CL-to buy-RES	one	M-rooster	two	hens
	'He buys a rooster and two hens.'					

- With respect to the nominal phrase, the modifier precedes the nucleus, as shown in (7). However, the possessive element follows that which is possessed, as is observed in (8).

(7)	<i>mitia</i>	<i>tõrene</i>
	two	women
	'two women'	

(8)	<i>avope</i>	<i>ki=ñeatõrene</i>
	father	ART-my wife
	'the father of my wife'	

- In Cayubaba, processes of incorporation are observed, as in (9), which consist of the incorporation of the direct object in the verb, which is in the same accent group.

(9)	<i>mera-h-i-diki-ñika</i>	<i>ãrehidya</i>
	FUT-1SG-CL-make-house	PRO:2SG.OI
	'I will build the house.'	

- Cayubaba also presents different subordination processes. The proclitic *ki =* in its subordinate function, for example, is used to indicate add-ons, as in (10), and it can also complete an adverbial subordinate, as in (11). It also distinguishes conjunctions that mark subordinate clauses and appear at the beginning of the sentence, for example, "*=chu*" 'because' in (12).

(10)	<i>ye-pe-h-a-ve-dya</i>	<i>ki-h-i-hudyuhi-a</i>
	NEG-always-1SG-CL-to say-2SG.OI	SUB-1SG-CL-to leave-2SG.OD
'I tell you, I will never leave you.'		

(11)	<i>ki-t-i-bòechò</i>	<i>k-a-ukuku-che</i>
	SUB-3SG-CL-to sell	ART-3SG-pork-3SG.POS
'when he sold his pig'		

(12)	<b><i>chu</i></b>	<i>h-i-bachari-e</i>
	because	1SG-CL-to tell-3SG.O
'Because I told him'		

## Vocabulary

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Loukotka (1968) lists the following basic vocabulary items for Cayuvava.<sup>[22]</sup>

<b>gloss</b>	<b>Cayuvava</b>
one	karata
two	mítia
three	kurapa
tooth	ai-che
tongue	iné
hand	daxe
woman	toréne
water	ikita
fire	idore
moon	iráre
maize	xiki
jaguar	yedava
house	iñíka

## See also

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- [Llanos de Moxos \(archaeology\)](#)

## Further reading

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## External links

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- [Lenguas de Bolivia](http://www.ru.nl/lenguasdebolivia/) (<http://www.ru.nl/lenguasdebolivia/>) (online edition)
- [Cayuvava](https://ids.clld.org/contributions/283) (<https://ids.clld.org/contributions/283>) (Intercontinental Dictionary Series)

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